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Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

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11
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02

USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02 /038 W
---------- 043968
R 162205Z JUL 76
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 2402
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

UNCLAS GUATEMALA 5106

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: GT, MX,PINS, PINT
SUBJ: GUATEMALAN REACTIONTO CHANGE IN EXCELSIOR LEADERSHIP

REF: MEXICO 8849

1. ONLY GUATEMALAN PUBLIC REACTION TO DEVELOPMENTS AT EXCELSIOR HAS BEEN THREE PRESS EDITORIALS, ALTHOUGH MOST OF PRESS HAS AT LEAST CARRIED WIRE SERVICE STORIES ON NEW YORK TIMES' CRITICAL EDITORIAL.

2. MOST HARD-HITTING OF THREE EDITORIALS APPEARED JULY 14 IN INDEPENDENT MORNING DAILY IMPACTO. EDITORIAL ENTITLED "BLOW TO THE PRESS" ACCUSES LOPEZ PORTILLO OF BEING UNWILLING TO CONTINUE ECHEVERRIA'S TOLERANT POLICY TOWARD INDEPENDENT EXCELSIOR AND STATES THAT LOPEZ "IS CONSIDERED RESPONSIBLE" FOR THE LEADERSHIP CHANGE. EDITORIAL ADDS THAT ONE-PARTY SYSTEM OF MEXICO, WITH PRESIDENT SELECTED BY PRI LEADERS RATHER THAN BY PEOPLE, CANNOT TOLERATE CRITICAL PRESS EVEN IF ONLY BY ALLUSION TO OTHER SYSTEMS WHERE FREE DEMOCRATICE POLITICS IS NOT ALLOWED.

3. SECOND EDITORIAL IN PRESTIGOUS INDEPENDENT AFTERNOON
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DAILY IMPARCIAL JULY 15 IS ENTITLED "SILENCING EXCELSIOR-

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AN EVIL WIND BLOWS OVER LATIN AMERICAN PRESS." WITHIN
CONTEXT OF OTHER RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST PRESS EDITORIAL
LAMENTS EXCELSIOR DEVELOPMENTS BUT DOES NOT DIRECTLY
ATTACK ANYONE. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES WITH PERSONAL TRIBUTE
TO SCHERER. "IT IS SAD THAT DEED OF THIS NATURE WISHES
TO STAIN RECORD OF EXPERIENCED REPORTER, INDEPENDENT
JOURNALIST, AND VALIANT DIRECTOR JULIO SCHERER GARCIA, WHO
NEVER LUSTED FOR WEALTH NOR THREATENED POWER OF THE MIGHTY.
HE HAS RECEIVED VALIANT DEMONSTRATIONS OF SOLIDARITY AND
TO THOSE WE ADD OUR OWN, IN THE HOPE OF PROMPT RECOVERY
AND REVIVAL OF EXCELSIOR'S INDEPENDENCE."

4. THIRD EDITORIAL IN LIBERAL AFTEROON DAILY LA TARDE
ENTITLED "FREEDOM TN PRESS IN AGONY" JULY 15 IS MORE GENERAL
STILL. IT EXPRESSES CONCERN OVER RECENT THREATS TO
FREEDOM OF PRESS INCLUDING, IN ADDITION TO EXCELSIOR,
UNESCO CONFERENCE AND RECENT CLOSURE OF SEVERAL
NEWSPAPERS IN PURU.
ANDREWS

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